

*Winter 24 | Presbyterian Church of Victoria*



# FELLOW WORKERS

**What's  
Old is New**





# FELLOW WORKERS

## CONTENTS

*Editorial: What's old is new* | page 4

*Networking Nomads* | page 6

*From Korea with Love* | page 7

*Interview: with Ian Hutton* | page 8

*Out West - Patrol + Parish together* | page 10

*What's Coming Up at New Dunesk* | page 12

*Book Review: Growth + Change* | page 14

*Book Review: Principle & Principal* | page 16

*Diaspora: When unreached people groups come to you* | page 18

*PWMU Cookbook Thrives* | page 20

*Good Evenings* | page 21

*Australian Presbyterian World Mission* | page 22

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*Fellow Workers*

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## EDITORIAL: WHAT'S OLD IS NEW

**STEPHEN MCDONALD**

It's the 80s.

Fluro clothing everywhere. Big sunnies. Footballers with moustaches. Mulletts (not only on men).

It's the 80s. Again.

What is it with old trends coming back?

### THE OLD

You can't miss the old when you're reading the Bible. A whole big bit of it is called 'Old'. But it's still there.

The Old Testament doesn't disappear with the arrival of the New. Jesus said so Himself:

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished." (Matthew 5:17-18).

Referring to the two main parts of the Old Testament, Jesus says He hasn't come to do away with them. Instead, Jesus brings them to their

fullness. Jesus completely keeps the Law and accomplishes everything that the Prophets spoke and wrote about. Even the smallest details are not scrubbed out, but completed by Jesus.

That is part of the meaning of Jesus' dying declaration from the cross, 'It is finished' (John 19:30).

So, in the new covenant, the old is recognised as old and as fulfilled by Jesus (Acts 15:13-21, Galatians 5:3-4).

### THE NEW

But as we've already noticed, the old is still here. And it's not just a leftover. Looking back from our standpoint after the cross, we find that in the old there's a lot of the new. In fact, the good news about Jesus was announced in the Old Testament Scriptures (Romans 1:2-3).

As Paul writes to the Galatians:

"7 Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. 8 And the Scripture, foreseeing

that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed." 9 So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith." (Galatians 3:7-9)

The same spiritual blessings given to us in the Gospel were announced to Abraham and given to him by faith (Romans 4). The promises God gave Abraham in Genesis 12 of offspring, land, and blessing are all fulfilled in Jesus Christ. He is the promised child who was born to crush the head of the serpent (Genesis 3:15, John 12:23-28, Hebrews 2:14-15). He is the place where God's people are at home and can worship Him (John 4:19-24). He is the one who makes us a holy nation of God's beloved people (John 16:27, 1 Peter 2:9-10).

So, the promises God gave in the old covenant are essential to understand who Jesus is and why He came. That's why it matters whether we read the Old Testament Scriptures the way Jesus says we should:

"You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life." (John 5:39-40)

How we read the Old Testament matters, not only for our own salvation, but for our witness to Jesus (Luke 24:44-49).

### THE SAME

That's why, when we look at the old covenant, we'll find the Gospel in its promises and even in its ceremonies.

When we put circumcision and baptism side by side, we find the same promise: God will cut away or wash away the sin of everyone who repents and believes in Him (Deuteronomy 10:16, 30:6, Jeremiah 4:4, Colossians 2:11-12).

Doing the same with the Passover and the Lord's Supper, again the same spiritual blessings are revealed: Everyone God has rescued from slavery and death is brought into a bountiful fellowship with Him as His people forever (Exodus 12:25-

27, Matthew 8:11, Luke 13:29, 1 Corinthians 10:17, 11:26).

As new covenant believers, we look back at the old and find the same Gospel promises. That's why the Westminster Confession of Faith says, "The sacraments of the Old Testament, in regard of the spiritual things thereby signified and exhibited, were, for substance, the same with those of the New." (WCF 27.5).

The symbols that illustrate and confirm them are different, but the promises are the same. And Jesus is the 'Yes' to all of them (2 Corinthians 1:20).

We do not need to repeat or continue the signs of the old covenant. Not because they were wrong or unimportant. But because the new signs God has given have the very same spiritual meaning, purpose, and grace belonging to the old signs.

### SO WHAT?

We can be in danger of falling off either side of the horse:

We might hold on to the old covenant signs, thinking they do something or mean something that isn't there in the new covenant signs (so we'd be missing out).

Or we can miss the continuity between the old covenant signs and the new, overlooking how God used them to declare and confirm the Gospel to those who believed before Jesus lived and died and rose again.

Like the 80s, we should remember the old covenant and value all that is good about it. But we don't live there anymore.

Fellow workers, is our witness to Jesus enriched by the fact that the Gospel that was announced beforehand is the same Gospel we believe and share today?

*Stephen McDonald is Convener of the State News Committee*

## NETWORKING NOMADS

'A sower went out to sow...' (Matthew 13:3)

Any congregation would be very glad to have Ron and Lyn Hicks within its fold. Humble, friendly, "can-do" kind of people who are also mission-minded, committed Christians. The Hicks' commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ is seen in their many years of local church service at Mittagong (NSW) but also in their keen involvement as PIM Nomads.

When Ron and Lyn first heard about the establishment of the PIM Nomads Network back in 2020, they immediately felt that it might be a ministry they could be involved in. The idea resonated with them - they enjoyed caravanning and travelling around outback and inland Australia, and with training supplied by PIM they could be further equipped to evangelise and disciple those whom they encountered when "on track". They loved the initial four-day training event held at New Dunesk and being part of the foundation cohort of PIM Nomads. Ron and Lyn love the vision of New Dunesk to "inspire, equip and send out" gospel workers into remote and isolated areas of Australia.

While on a recent trip through WA, Ron and Lyn took time to visit the Mount Magnet Presbyterian Church congregation to encourage and share in the ministry there. The further north and west they have travelled, the less visible signs of Christianity they have encountered. By word and literature, however, they have sought to sow the seed. For as Jesus said, the harvest is nevertheless plentiful, even though the workers remain few. On the homeward leg of their journey back to Mittagong, they visited the Fremantle Presbyterian Church congregation. There they met the PIM Superintendent Stuart Bonnington, and shared what has happened for them so far as PIM Nomads, being like the Sower going forth to sow the seed of the Word of God. Good work has been done but much more remains.

Ron and Lyn warmly encourage readers to consider joining the PIM Nomads Network - a community of like-minded travellers seeking to use their time and travels for God's glory. For more information on the Nomads Network, visit [pim.org.au/nomads-network](http://pim.org.au/nomads-network), email Stuart at [superintendent@pim.org.au](mailto:superintendent@pim.org.au) or call 0438 868 964.

## FROM KOREA WITH LOVE

1890 Fusan... 2024 Busanjin

Melbourne > Fusan > Pusan > Busan (Busanjin) > Melbourne

An ongoing friendship is developing between PMU Victoria and the very first church established by PWMU missionaries from Victoria. Three women were sent out to Korea in 1890 along with a married couple. They laboured in the south, while others from various countries served Jesus in other parts of Korea. It is apparent that the Lord had prepared the hearts of the Korean people to welcome and embrace the good news because there was an immediate response. Today Protestant Christians in Korea number around 8.6 million, with around 100 different Presbyterian denominations. The major two of these are Hapdong (The Presbyterian Church in Korea) and Tonghap (The Presbyterian Church of Korea).

On 13th January 2024, an ensemble of seventeen young musicians from the Busanjin Presbyterian church, with their entourage, travelled to Melbourne to say "thank you" to PWMU. The church, under the leadership of Senior Pastor Rev Chungwoo Shin, wishes to promote mission interest amongst the youth - theirs and ours. An audience of about forty people was enthralled by the enthusiastic traditional drummers. The orchestral musicians presented an entertaining program of a very high standard. The conducting was superb, and the two pianists were world-class. PWMU and the PCV say "thank you" to the Busanjin Church.

Present at the concert in the Assembly Hall were the PCV Moderator, Rev Ian Hutton, and his wife Ann, members of the APWM Committee and PWMU Council, supportive Korean Presbyterians living in Victoria, friends of PWMU, and Miss Hannah Davies, our missionary who teaches English to prospective Korean missionaries at the MTI (Missionary Training Institute) in Yeosu, South Korea. Soli deo gloria.

This visit by the youth ensemble continues decades of mutual cross-cultural encouragement between Presbyterians in Victoria and Korea. On the day

following the Melbourne concert, the group played beautifully at the Uniting Church in Ballarat, where the Rev Toby McIntosh gave a short chronological account of the first twenty years of the Australian mission in Korea. After sharing lunch, the group visited the grave of Belle Menzies and Ebenezer Presbyterian, which was her home church.

The tour was organised by Rev Dr Myong Duk Yang, who has written a series of engaging books about Australian missionaries in Korea. The last biography relates the story of Belle Menzies; his newly published books are about the Rev Gelson Engel, who spent 38 years in Korea. Engel's journey was thus: Germany > Basel > India > Victoria (Ararat) > Korea > Victoria. One of Dr Myong's books is a graphic novel designed for young people. Copies of these books are available for free at the PWMU Office, now located at 690 Elgar Rd, Box Hill North, adjacent to the PTC. One marvels at how the Lord Almighty moves his servants around the globe to reach His intended hearers with the gospel of grace.

Roslyn Brown  
PWMU State President



## INTERVIEW WITH IAN HUTTON

### HOW DID GOD PREPARE YOU FOR THE MINISTRY?

I entered ministry a little later in life and so I had been exposed to many unique life experiences by that time. I am constantly amazed at how God prepares a person for the tasks He will give them.

I grew up on a farm and was heavily involved in farming from an early age because of the illness of my father. Farming is a unique experience – you are so dependent on God’s provision – and are so exposed to the challenges of weather and the environment. I often felt like I was pushing against a huge wave that could have broken over me at any moment. But that builds character, it teaches you to trust in God’s provision and it teaches you to persevere. (James 1:2ff). I also went to University and became a Secondary School teacher and TAFE teacher for a number of years.

My father died when I was completing year 12 – he had been unwell for most of the time I knew him. (My parents had become Christians following the 1959 Billy Graham Meetings at the MCG). Losing someone close is incredibly hard especially when you are younger, but I know that those experiences helped me understand loss when I was ministering to others (2 Corinthians 1:3ff). His illness also came at a time when the health and wealth gospel was gaining strength in Australia. It was so hurtful when others – trying to help – gave advice such as: “If he had enough faith he would be healed”. I think those comments drove me to gain a deeper understanding of what the Bible said about illness and suffering and so I think that also stimulated a journey towards the reformed faith (though I probably didn’t realise it at that time).

When Ann and I began to attend our local Presbyterian Church not long after we were married we were faced with many challenges. (Ann has been a huge part of ministry life and I thank her for her support). The church was meeting

in rented properties and there were only a small number of believers in the church. I was once asked by an unbelieving elder if I would become an elder. I asked: “Why would that be?”. His answer was: “Well when we have the Lord’s Supper there are only three elders up front and it looks uneven!”. Over time God did a work in the Church and I became an elder and session clerk. During those difficult years God planted the seed for pastoral ministry and He was preparing me for future ministry challenges. In my first year in ministry in Ararat I ended up with 3 Interim Moderator tasks mostly of small struggling churches. The earlier experience of being an elder and session clerk in a small country church was a great resource to draw on at that time.

### ARE THERE PARTICULAR LESSONS YOU’VE GAINED FROM MINISTRY THAT COULD BE HELPFUL TO MINISTERS OR THOSE CONSIDERING MINISTRY?

I think a key lesson is to remember constantly that it is the Lord’s Church. When we think it is our church – consciously or even subconsciously – we end up taking everything that happens personally. I often reflect on how God was dealing with Israel throughout the Old Testament – to bring them to Himself – and then how that applies to all the ups and downs of church life today. God is teaching us, He is perhaps teaching the minister, teaching the Church (locally) and the Church (denominationally) how to be more like Jesus. In all of that there are the ups and downs of life and ministry and we need to see them in that broader context.

The other lesson came from an old pastor of mine. From his hospital bed a few days before he went to be with Jesus and I was studying for the ministry he said: “Whatever you do, love your people.”

### WHAT ASPECTS OF THE PCV’S HISTORY AND HERITAGE ARE YOU ESPECIALLY THANKFUL FOR?

I am very thankful for the PCV’s return to the scriptures and for the Westminster Confession of Faith which gives amazing structure and guidance on the message of the scriptures. As I gradually became exposed to reformed doctrine I realised that my own doctrine had significant inconsistencies. I found myself on a pathway of understanding the scriptures in a way that put God at the centre of all we do and showed God’s heart of love towards His people as revealed in Jesus.

### WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE PRESENT AND FUTURE CHALLENGES FOR THE PCV, AND THE REFORMED AND EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA MORE GENERALLY?

I have often pondered the balance between truth and love in the PCV. There are always those who tend toward the doctrinal side but sometimes at the expense of love and there are those who focus on love but have somehow neglected some doctrine. I think for some this is a challenge that continues. We must have a balance that reflects God’s character and how He deals with His people.

The other area of challenge is how the Church engages with the current cultural issues. That culture is trying to find freedom and life by discarding all boundaries and empowering the individual. The danger for the church is to get embroiled in a negative battle of trying to maintain standards. The better way is to be active in promoting the gospel as a far better alternative that gives life in all its fullness. As a church we know that the issues of gender, abortion, sexual freedom, and euthanasia – amongst many – are simply a product of a fallen world and it is a lie to suggest that they lead to freedom. Real life as it is meant to be is only found in Christ.

### WHAT DO YOU HOPE YOUR TIME AS MODERATOR WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE PCV?

One of the Moderator’s vows is “...to seek the peace and unity of this Church.” The older I get the more I realise the importance that peace and unity are to the church. I can promote this as I travel around the state visiting various congregations and institutions and strengthening relationships with them. It is a wonderful thing to see congregations faithfully persevering in gospel work and to see some churches that have grown from times when they have struggled to now be in a time of growth and expansion. I am encouraged and we should all be encouraged by this.

*Rev. Ian Hutton is the Moderator of the General Assembly of Victoria for 2023-24*



## OUT WEST - PATROL AND PARISH TOGETHER

The Miles-Roma Charge on the Warrigo Highway between Brisbane and Charleville is toward the top of the list of remote congregations in the Presbyterian Church of Queensland (and Australia).

Despite comparative isolation and current factors that erode the existence of the Christian Church in such contexts, the Miles-Roma congregation - led by the Session and the Rev Glen Perkins - is committed to a bold and biblical mission 'to be Christ's body, glorifying God, making followers of Jesus together'. A central part of this mission is replanting the Roma congregation, which is well located for focused PIM ministry among the people

in southwestern Queensland. The Miles-Roma congregational mission has much in common with the PIM, which exists to see people in the remote and sparsely populated areas of Australia become mature and faithful followers of Jesus. Not surprisingly, Glen is a highly valued member of the PIM Committee.

In the Lord's providence, a close relationship between the Miles-Roma Charge and the PIM has developed in intentional evangelism, discipleship, and Christian pastoral care. At the heart of this relationship are Doug and Marcia Walker, the volunteer PIM ministry team in the St George Area Patrol, who also are a crucial part of the Christian

leadership at Miles-Roma. In Doug and Marcia, Patrol and Parish come together in a busy ministry.

The Walkers live in Dulacca and use the Warrego Highway to evangelise, disciple and care. Marcia teaches RI in Drillham during school terms.

From Roma (where they are involved in strengthening morning and evening Bible studies), especially in the cooler times of the year, the Walkers patrol in a clearly defined area between Mitchell and St George. "We have built some good relationships there, but we long to spend a solid block of time in the area. A patrol without side trips is usually about 800 to 1000 kms" says Doug.

Much Gospel work has been and is being done by Doug and Marcia Walker, all of which have proven 'worth driving for'. The prayers and practical support of the people of the Presbyterian Church of Australia to this end are eagerly sought.

If you would like to learn more about Doug and Marcia Walker and the St George Patrol, visit [pim.org.au/give/st-george-area/](http://pim.org.au/give/st-george-area/). You can sign up to the mailing list to receive prayer requests and updates, or consider supporting the Walkers financially.

For more information about the Miles-Roma Presbyterian Church, visit [milesromapresbyterianchurch.org.au](http://milesromapresbyterianchurch.org.au).



## WHAT'S COMING UP AT NEW DUNESK

Over the coming winter months, PIM will be hosting two practical workshops at New Dunesk, each with a unique purpose and vision:

### COUNTRY PREACHERS WORKSHOP 7-10 JUNE

PIM is once again partnering with Langham Partnership to offer the third installment of the Country Preachers Workshop. This course is very practical in its presentation, catering to both the first-time preacher and those who are seeking to develop their preaching abilities further.

The workshop is made up of seminars and small groups, known as preaching fellowships, where participants learn how to study a Bible passage, and build a sermon that is faithful, clear and relevant.

Cost: \$250 (includes camping facilities and all meals)

More information: [pim.org.au/event/country-preachers-workshop](http://pim.org.au/event/country-preachers-workshop)

### COUNTRY BELIEVERS LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP 1-4 AUGUST

A new event for 2024, this workshop will provide practical training and biblical guidance on how to be a church leader in the areas that God has placed you. Whether you are an elder, bible study leader, youth group leader, Sunday School teacher or are preparing to take on a leadership role in the future, this workshop is applicable to everyone.

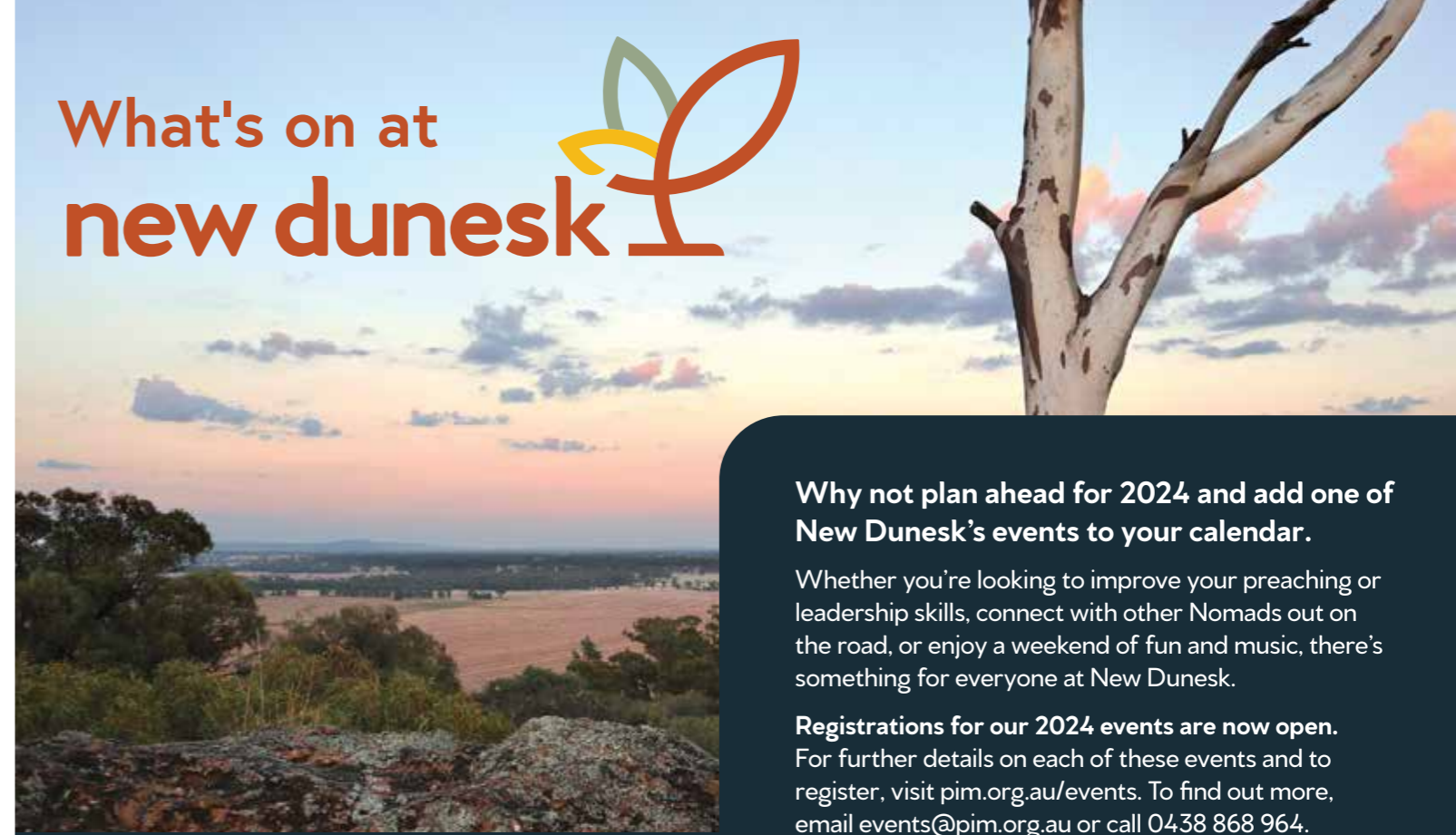
Cost: \$250 (includes camping facilities and all meals)

More information: [pim.org.au/event/country-believers-leadership-workshop](http://pim.org.au/event/country-believers-leadership-workshop)

## MINISTRY MOVES

- Rev. John Wilson has concluded 38 years of service to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, first as Junior Clerk of Assembly (1985-1994), then as Deputy Clerk of Assembly (1994-2007), and most recently as Clerk of Assembly (April 2007 to December 2023). He now returns to teaching at the Presbyterian Theological College as Lecturer in Church History and Practical Theology. Rev. Peter Phillips is the Acting Clerk of Assembly.
- The Presbytery of Gippsland ordained Licentiate Stephen Denness on Sunday 4th February at the Leongatha Presbyterian Church.
- Cameron Weir was licenced to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ by the Presbytery of Melbourne East at a service held at South Yarra Presbyterian Church on Friday 9th February.
- The Presbytery of Melbourne West licenced Mitchell Amoah at Sunshine Presbyterian Church on Friday 16th February 2024
- Mordialloc Presbyterian Church and Cheltenham Presbyterian Church have united to form BayChurch Presbyterian. The Presbytery of Flinders officially declared the union and inducted Rev. Paul Huynh into the parish as the minister on Friday 23rd February.
- Mr Lindsay Kliendienst was inducted at St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church, Flemington, as pastor of the congregation and missionary of the Presbyterian and Scots' Church Joint Mission on Sunday 25th February.
- The Commission of the General Assembly appointed Rev Cameron Garrett of Morwell to be the new Clerk of the General Assembly of Victoria, commencing 1st July 2024

## What's on at new dunesk



**Why not plan ahead for 2024 and add one of New Dunesk's events to your calendar.**

Whether you're looking to improve your preaching or leadership skills, connect with other Nomads out on the road, or enjoy a weekend of fun and music, there's something for everyone at New Dunesk.

**Registrations for our 2024 events are now open.** For further details on each of these events and to register, visit [pim.org.au/events](http://pim.org.au/events). To find out more, email [events@pim.org.au](mailto:events@pim.org.au) or call 0438 868 964.

### MARCH

19-24 March 2024

#### Nomads Network Training and Orientation

A week of practical evangelism and apologetics training with other Nomads.



### APRIL

12-14 April 2024

#### Dads and Descendants

An adventure filled camping weekend of bonfire devotions, survival skill activities, 4WDing and so much more!



### JUNE

7-10 June 2024

#### Country Preachers Workshop

Develop your expositional preaching skills through this practical workshop, presented by Langham Partnership.



### AUGUST

1-4 August 2024

#### Country Believers Leadership Workshop

Practical training and biblical guidance on how to be a church leader in the areas that God has placed you.

### OCTOBER

1-6 October 2023

#### Nomads Network Reconnect Week

An informal week of fellowship, encouragement and reflection with other Nomads in the Network.

5 October 2024

#### TRACKS: An Outback Gospel Concert

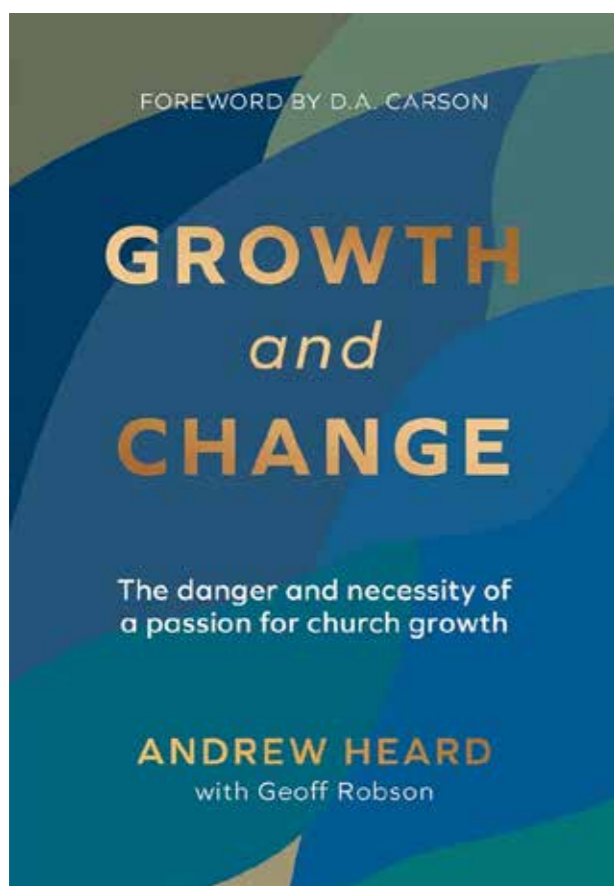
A family friendly weekend of camping and live music at New Dunesk. Be sure not to miss this exciting weekend! Camp out under the stars, sit around a warm campfire and enjoy live music from an exciting lineup of Gospel country music singers.



**REVIEW:**

# GROWTH AND CHANGE: THE DANGER AND NECESSITY OF A PASSION FOR CHURCH GROWTH

DAVID MARTIN



*Growth and Change: the danger and necessity of a passion for church growth by Andrew Heard – Matthias Media, 2024.*

ISBN: 9781922980137

## Seriously challenging church leaders

I don't usually read a book in a day. In fact, I have at least four good books on the go that I started months ago. But, with this book, a couple of days after reading the first four chapters I took it up and finished the whole thing in one go. I just couldn't put it down again. It turned out to be a great use of a public holiday!

Andrew Heard (from now on I'll just call him Andrew) is pastor of EV Church on the Central Coast of NSW and he heads up Reach Australia. His book *Growth and Change* is designed to give us a passion for church growth and a willingness to change how we lead. Rather than a detailed review, I'll just give you my ten standout features of the book.

Firstly, three points about the book generally:

1. It is very well written, thanks to Geoff Robson, the editor behind Andrew. Further, the book has a sustained argument from start to finish and it is crystal clear throughout.
2. It is comprehensively researched. Andrew references the likes of Aristotle, Baxter, Calvin, Carey, Carson, Edwards, the Jensen brothers, Keller, Köstenberger and O'Brien, Lightfoot, Lloyd-Jones, Mangalwadi, Marshall and Payne, Murray, Piper, Spurgeon and more. The citations are all carefully woven into his arguments.

3. It has a useful structure. Each chapter ends with a guide for reflection, either personally or in teams, thus facilitating wider use of the book. The guides include Bible passages, questions and quotes. I'm itching to take my elders through this book.

And now, seven more points more specifically about the book's content:

4. It is thoroughly biblical. A rough and random count of one chapter (15 pages) came up with 30 references, often with the biblical text printed out in full. And there was never a case of proof texting, but rather an earnest desire to feel the full weight of the biblical testimony and to penetrate the deep veins of truth.
5. It is carefully balanced. There are no black and white, simplistic explanations, rather full recognition of the complexities involved. Heard identifies the two sides of issues and argues for "a complex middle ground."
6. It is extremely thoughtful. Andrew has reflected a lot on the topic of church leadership and his pastoral experience. The book is full of practical insights on all the factors that contribute to healthy growth on the one hand, or sickly stagnation (my phrase!) on the other.

7. It is very inspiring. This old man is refreshed and re-invigorated for the task of gospel ministry in the few short years that remain to me. I was reminded why I left accounting more than 30 years ago, and why I risked planting a new church at 56 years of age.
8. It is deeply personal. Andrew's love for the lost spills out over the pages. He is passionate about saving as many souls as possible.
9. Above all these, it is seriously challenging. We leaders are called to face up to the responsibility of growing the church (outputs) and to seriously reflect on a whole range of practices and comfortable heart attitudes (inputs) that may be limiting this growth. The back half of the book pinpoints what I perceive as one of our own denomination's problems and gives it a good jab.
10. But best of all, it is really emotional. I found myself weeping for the lost souls out there in the world and determined again not to put any stumbling blocks in their way nor to be a blockage to growth myself.

If you are a church leader or someone who wants to encourage and help your leaders, I urge you to make full use of this book.

*David Martin is pastor of New Life Presbyterian Church, Officer.*



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graphic design

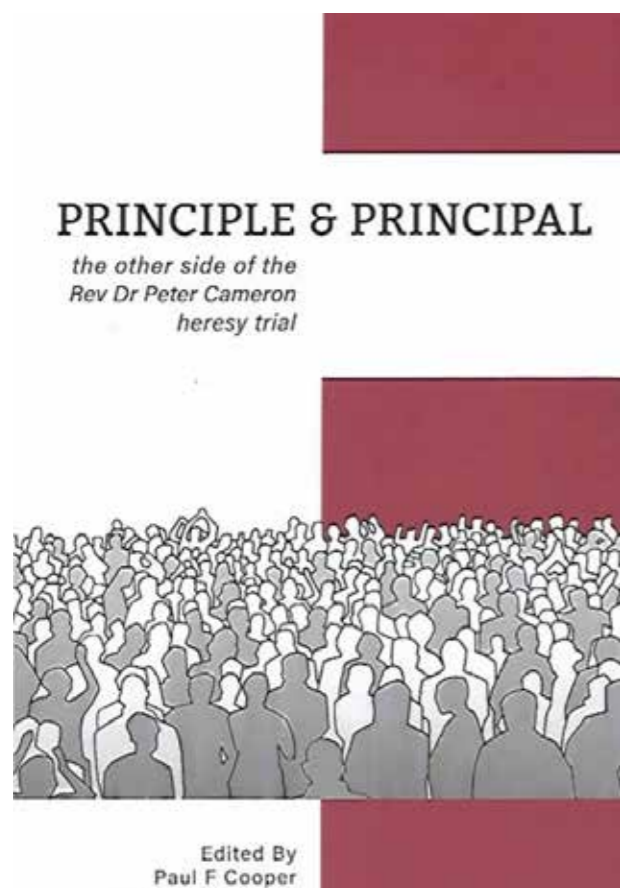
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## REVIEW: PRINCIPLE & PRINCIPAL

CAMPBELL MARKHAM



Paul Cooper and David Burke (eds.). *Principle & Principal: the other side of the Rev Dr Peter Cameron heresy trial*. Stanhope Gardens, NSW: Eider Books, 2023

“Know Thyself”, inscribed in ancient times upon Apollo’s Temple, is a maxim that applies just as much to a Christian denomination as to the individual. If we are going to be at all true and effective then we must know who we are, why we exist, and what our mission is.

The Presbyterian Church of Australia (PCA) ought then to be very grateful to Paul Cooper and David Burke for their three edited books so far, devoted to the recent history and doctrine of our denomination: *Burning or Bushed: the PCA 40 years on* (2017); *Read in the Light: the 1901 Declaratory Statement of the PCA* (2019); and

now *Principle & Principal: the other side of the Rev Dr Peter Cameron heresy trial* (2023).

*Principle & Principal* is a major exploration of a defining moment in the history of the PCA since the 1977 Union: the 1993 trial of the Rev Dr Peter Cameron, Principal of St Andrew’s College in Sydney, for public statements he made disowning and disparaging the inspiration and infallibility of Scripture.

It was a defining moment because if the denomination had refused to prosecute Cameron, or had failed in its prosecution, then the PCA as a whole might well have drifted into a similarly low view of Scripture or, at best, would have learned to accommodate such poisonous teaching in its seminaries and pulpits. In which case the PCA would have looked very different today: manned more by theological liberals and cultural appeasers than spirited guardians and exponents of Reformed Confessional orthodoxy.

Cooper and Burke’s book contains twenty-two (mostly) short essays from nineteen contributors. With its quaint punning title, copious duplicative material, and idiosyncratic formatting, it is a rough-hewn but nonetheless solid and nourishing piece of work: more shepherd’s pie than soufflé au fromage.

The book builds a careful historical context to the Cameron trial, describing the doctor’s history and the Church of Scotland from whence he came, as well as the theological and organisational state of the PCA at the turn of the 1990s. John McClean carefully explains the nature and purpose of theological confessions and the various kinds of false teaching that a confessional church may have to deal with, heresy constituting the most dangerous and consequential form of false teaching. The case itself and the trial and appeal are thoroughly and carefully described. It is all very interesting and compelling and the reader benefits

from a lot of patient research into the minutes of various presbyteries and assemblies, into Cameron’s copious books and articles, and into an abundance of contemporary church and newspaper articles and media reports.

Bruce Meller’s expert description of the trial and appeal processes, “A Court of Kangaroos or a Court of Owls”, is for me the highlight of the book. Meller helpfully explains that the Confession describes instead of prescribes our doctrine: office-bearers sign the Confession as a statement of the faith that they themselves own and intend to propagate and defend. Meller shows us how useful and important our statements of doctrine and polity are; we must labour to know them and to learn to use them well. May this chapter be required reading for all students of PCA theology and polity.

David Burke’s answer to the question, “Why Prosecute Dr Cameron?”, shows how vital it is, and always will be, for the church to actively defend its doctrine from false teaching. Our Lord promised that false teachers would come, and it is the pastor’s core duty to both teach the flock the Word, and to defend the flock from error, with loving diligence.

A number of essays describe the immediate public response to the trial (predominantly blind disgust), and the long-term result (an orthodox and steadfast PCA).

Three things struck me from *Principle & Principal*:

First, Cameron’s arrogance and dishonesty. He never hid his contempt for what he thought was the backward, uneducated, and unsophisticated “fundamentalist” doctrinal commitment of the PCA. By his own admission he entered the church with a mission to change it from within, to save it from its knuckle-dragging obscurantism to (his own idea of) enlightened liberalism. Yet, no guns were held to heads. No one compelled Cameron to come to Australia and to sign the Formula as one who owned and pledged to defend the Confession. It amazes me that a man who delighted to excoriate the church for its “dishonest or stupid” fundamentalism could at the same time be so blind to his own dishonesty as to sign with pen and ink documents that he, inwardly, fully intended to

undermine. “There but for the grace of God go I.” May the Lord deliver us all from such hypocrisy.

Second, the mountain of patient preparatory work undertaken by Bruce Christian, who agreed to be Cameron’s prosecutor, and Paul Cooper, who agreed to be spokesman for the PCA – to publicly defend the church’s actions to an inevitably hostile media. Not to mention their bravery. Thank God for these men who stood, like Horatius on the Tiber bridge before the Etruscan horde, to defend the church from such dazzling enemies at a critical time.

Third, it is only a matter of time before we are called to mount a similar defence. I can picture pastors bowing before our nation’s near-and-present anti-conversion laws, by refusing to help a same-sex attracted church member who comes to them for help and prayer; or by refusing to preach from the Bible against homosexual conduct without fear or favour. Will we be willing to lovingly correct and support such a negligent brother in our own midst? Will we be willing to prosecute him if he forsakes his vow “to the utmost of [his] power” to “assert, maintain, and defend the doctrine, worship, and government of this Church.”

Church discipline is an act of love; may I be surrounded by a strong and diligent band of brothers who will love me and Christ’s church enough to keep me true and faithful to my own confession, teaching, and pastoral work – by correcting me, admonishing me, or even, if needs be, by prosecuting me.

Right now we are entering into a new storm of challenges: challenges of an even greater and more insidious severity than those faced by our faithful brothers in the 1990s. May the Lord raise up men with like diligence, conviction, skill, courage, and love.

We can be very grateful to Paul Cooper and David Burke for *Principle & Principal*. I feel certain that it will be an important tool as we prepare and equip to face the storms ahead.

*Campbell Markham is the minister of Scots Church Freemantle*

## DIASPORA - WHEN UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUPS COME TO YOU

The notion of Unreached People Groups (UPGs) has been an important one in world missions for a few decades now. A UPG is usually understood to be a distinct ethnic group that is incapable of reaching itself. In other words, there are either no believers or so few believers in that people group that they would not ordinarily be able to reach their whole people group with the gospel without outside help. That means someone from outside must enter that community and begin to share both their lives and the gospel with people as they grow in learning the language and understanding the culture.

Now we are of course accustomed to thinking of unreached peoples as being somewhere “out there”, in strange and distant places. So we send suitably strange and intrepid folks we call “missionaries” out to those distant lands. And that’s how we play our part in “reaching the unreached.”

However, a relatively recent global phenomenon has given rise to a new buzzword and a new paradigm in world mission – “diaspora.” The word “diaspora” simply means “dispersion” or “scattering,” and it traditionally referred to Jews who were displaced because of the exile. (Have a look at John 7:35 and 1 Peter 1:1) But in the current context “diaspora” refers to all kinds of dispersed peoples who are living outside their place of origin. More people are moving around the globe both from and to more places than ever before. What we are saying here is that the scale and scope is unprecedented. It is so big that it creates a whole new challenge – and opportunity – for world mission, especially for reaching the unreached.

Consider the country of Afghanistan. There are not many places on earth so hostile to Christianity, so difficult to reach with the gospel. Yet in recent years how many Afghans have come to Australia? And in using the word Afghans I’ve already skated over the fact that Afghans are made up of different people groups. Afghans are not simply Afghans – they are Pashtun, Hazara, Tajik, and so on. Each of these have their own distinct language, culture,

historical background (and baggage), all of which means they each pose unique challenges for communicating the gospel.

In any case the broader point I am making is that each of these Afghan people groups would be considered “unreached.” But they are no longer just “out there” somewhere distant and hard to get to. They are practically on our doorstep. They are our neighbours, not just in the sense of proximity, but in the sense Jesus meant in the parable of the Good Samaritan – they are “strangers” among us who need help. Most of those coming from Afghanistan are deeply traumatised by war and conflict, they are fleeing oppression, and they need help adjusting to life in Australia. What might it look like for us to be good neighbours to them?

I have taken just this one country as an example. There are many more countries and people groups. Last time I checked the census data for Victoria, I concluded that the largest unreached people group is the Punjabi people, who are mostly Sikh. Do you know how to find out what new, and perhaps unreached, people groups may have moved into your area?

So, do we still need specialised “cross-cultural workers” like the old-fashioned missionary types for this outreach to unreached diaspora peoples in Australia? Absolutely. There is still a lot of language- and culture-specific work to be done to effectively communicate the Gospel within unreached groups. Further, those who are dedicated to reaching a specific people group will ideally be working with a “whole people group” strategy. That is, they will be thinking about what is happening with that people group in other countries and especially in the country of origin. For example, they may encourage and help prepare those whom God calls to go back to their original country for the sake of the name of Jesus. Or they may work with new believers to prepare resources that can be used globally for that people group.



But here is the exciting new aspect of all of this: the local church does not simply send these “missionaries” off to work somewhere else, the local church remains directly involved in the work itself, alongside the “cross-cultural worker!” Since diaspora people have moved from all over the world into our neighbourhoods, our churches are now their neighbourhood churches. For better or for worse, the local church will play a role in shaping their understanding of what it is the cross-cultural specialist is talking to them about in their own language. Local churches and members of the congregation may well be doing the things they would (or should) be doing anyway, but now there is a wonderful cross-cultural element – and a potential impact on unreached peoples!

Just to throw out a few examples: If the Church facility is a centre for practical helps such as a food ministry or play group, people from unreached groups might show up. Some may even come to

services. Even if they don’t understand much, will they have a good experience of Christian community? Do you have any relevant language literature or other media on hand? And ordinary members of the congregation don’t need to be cultural specialists to be good neighbours and to offer a hand of friendship. Sometimes it might take just a little training in how to relate to people across cultures.

How can your local church play a part in reaching these unreached diaspora peoples? How can you partner with believers from an unreached group, or with cross-cultural workers who are focused on a particular people- or language-group?

An APWM/Pioneers cross-cultural training day will be held on 17 August from 9.30 am to 3.00 pm at Donvale Presbyterian Church. Save the date!

*Rob Paix is an elder at Dandenong Presbyterian Church*

## Administrative Support for Churches

*Get in touch with us today.  
We'd love to help!*



## PWMU COOKBOOK THRIVES

ROSLYN BROWN

The PWMU Cookbook remains a valued resource in the homes of many Victorians. A minor review by the PWMU Cookbook Committee is in progress for the next print run. 2024 marks 120 years since the first edition of the cookbook. This makes it historically significant, being the oldest of its kind in the world! A major review is envisaged to mark 125 years, in 2029.

The funds raised from sales of the cookbook have consistently benefited the mission work of the Presbyterian Church, via the PWMU (Presbyterian women's Missionary Union). Current proceeds fund bursaries for theological students to complete or further their theological studies in Zambia - the Rev Jairos Kuchulu - and Ethiopia, where three South Sudanese men are completing their studies. Rev Simon Koang is nearing completion of his Masters. PWMU is honoured to be contributing to the work of the gospel in this way.

Church groups, amongst others, may use PWMU Cookbooks to raise funds at their own events. What could be better than improving the culinary skills of people in your community, whilst also playing a part in worldwide mission?

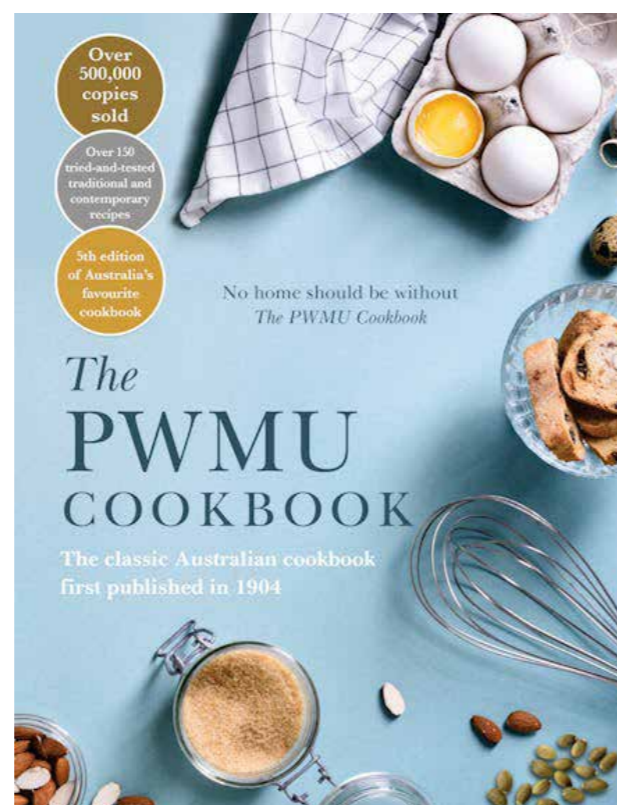
The simplest way to obtain a supply of cookbooks for sale is by contacting the PWMU office – office@pwmu.org.au or 0466124261.

Cookbooks are also selling well at Koorong and other retail outlets.

The Cookbook Committee, comprised of both PCV and UCA (Uniting Church of Australia) members, has also made cookbooks available to five Community Houses in the Loddon Mallee area. These are intended for those affected by the devastating floods in late 2022, including Rochester. In the words of a spokesperson, "there is nothing quite as strengthening and stabilising as good food. I love the attainability of the recipes and their ingredients in the PWMU books. They are a great invitation to get cooking."

Delegates at Assembly in recent years have enjoyed afternoon tea provided by the Cookbook Committee. You can view some of the delicious offerings on the PWMU Cookbook facebook page, which also provides cooks' tips on recipes, with photos.

Roslyn Brown PWMU Cookbook Representative



## GOOD EVENINGS

KATHRYN GATT

*"Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. Then they can urge the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God." Titus 2:3-5*

*Titus 2:3-5 is one of the clearest passages in Scripture that deals with ministry to women by women. Paul instructs Titus that women should be teaching other women what is good, and what it means to live as a Christian woman. We believe that this pattern should be the norm in every church. However, we're finding the reality is that most women don't currently have the opportunity to meet regularly with and learn from more spiritually mature women.*

As well as our On the Road Conferences, Women's Ministries Victoria has created our Good Evenings program to help meet this need. We are going to hear from wise Christian women who will teach us from God's word and share their experiences and insights with us, to help us to fix our eyes on what is good. Over the course of the year, we'll explore a range of topics related to Christian life and ministry for women. Each evening will consist of a pre-recorded talk and then time to discuss together what we've learned to deepen our understanding of the topics.

Good Evenings is free and takes place on Zoom, so you can join us no matter where you are in the

state, and no matter your budget. Sessions run fortnightly throughout the year during school term time.

Many (but not all) of these talks were initially given for a WMV evening program in 2018. If you participated then, you are still very welcome to join us to refresh your knowledge of what was taught, as well as have time to ask questions and connect and discuss with other Christian women. Or you may like to join us just for the topics you missed, or just for the weeks with new content. It's up to you!

Whether you've joined us before, or it is your first time, we would love you to join us for some Good Evenings. You can Zoom in on your own, or see if a group of women in your church would like to meet together for a watch party.

If you would like to participate, but can't meet on Monday evenings, please register anyway and you will be emailed the video link and discussion questions so that you can benefit from the teaching at a time that suits you.

You can register for WMV's Good Evenings program at [wmv.org.au/good-evenings](http://wmv.org.au/good-evenings)

*Kathryn Gatt is the Women's Ministries Facilitator with WMV*

**‘PCA, YOU HAVE ENABLED THIS...’**

At the time of writing, the PresAID Convenor, the Rev John Wilson, is in Africa visiting one of the congregations of our Partner Church, St Peters Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (Blantyre Synod) in Malawi. Through the PresAID Easter 2022 Appeal, St Peters has constructed a Ministry Centre that enables the congregation to reach out in an area where there are great needs.

John writes:

“The St Peter’s congregation commenced life as a prayer house, then after purchasing land, became a fully-fledged congregation with Rev Colin Mbawa as their first minister. In terms of buildings (because there were NONE) the congregation built themselves a very impressive church facility and then with the PCA’s PresAID donation they have now constructed a very fine ministry centre for all kinds of Gospel ministry. Previously all their Sunday School children (200 or so) had to walk down the road to meet in a primary school.

As I commence preaching at the 2¼ hour point in the service, it’s hard to describe, but there’s a reverent hush that comes over the congregation, a sense of expectation that something special will be heard in the preaching of God’s Word. There’s no shuffling, no expressions of “I’ve had enough”. God gave me unusual energy and ability to communicate from John 6.

I’m just so privileged to stand beside this new facility, to pray and officially open this mission – principally funded by the well-wishers and generous hearts who give to PresAID appeals. Giving from Australia makes a HUGE difference here in Central Africa – I can testify to it. Presbyterian Church of Australia – you have enabled this Malawian congregation to engage in Jesus’ ministry and to be a blessing to its community. The local chief sent his emissary to thank us.”

*Photo: St Peter’s Ministry Centre  
Caption: Rev Colin M’Bawa (L) with some St Peter’s leaders*



**PWMU: AN IMPORTANT SOURCE OF SUPPORT**

When someone serves in cross-cultural mission, the support they receive from Australia is vitally important. Their family, their home church and other support networks play a key role in helping them remain on the field. Those sent from Victoria benefit from the support provided by PWMU.

PWMU provides assistance in the form of:

- prayer
- financial assistance following a birth
- grants to assist in ministry or for a particular need

In addition, each year PWMU publishes 10 monthly newsletters, a booklet of monthly

devotions and a quarterly mission-focused magazine for children, called ‘Dayspring’. PWMU’s annual ‘Dayspring Day’ is run for primary-aged children to get excited about mission and learn how they can be missionaries for Jesus every day!

In recent years bursaries have been provided for overseas students to study theology in their own country or region.

To find out more about the PWMU, and perhaps see some ways in which you could practically support those who serve in mission, please go to the PWMU’s website: [www.pwmu.org.au](http://www.pwmu.org.au)



**“IT IS A LONG-AWAITED DREAM COME TRUE FOR US.”**

“I want to quote from Genesis 1:15 from God’s Word ‘Let there be light.’ for Talua.”, with those words Talua Principal, Pastor Philip Baniuri, turned on the switch to activate the solar system that now provides the Talua Theological Training Institute with power 24 hours a day.

There is a joy in giving and being a blessing to brothers and sisters in Christ who sometimes live far away from us. For many years the Presbyterian Church of Australia has sought to be a blessing to the Talua Theological Training Institute. The latest expression of that blessing is the Talua Solar Project.

After 14 months of planning, the solar panels are now up and running. Talua Principal Philip Baniuri says “It is a long awaited dream come true for us. Thank you for all your support and prayers from the Presbyterian Church of Australia family. God bless you all.”

APWM would like to thank everyone who gave so generously to this project through the PresAID Easter 2023 Appeal. Thanks are due to Andrew Schache who coordinated the project and Peter Wright who provided much of the technical know-how. Both men belong to the St John’s on Geddes Presbyterian Church (Toowoomba). Thanks are also due to the other nine team members who generously gave of their time and skills in a humid environment to see this project through to completion.

This has been a genuine team effort — the preparatory work carried out by Talua, the generous donors who made the purchase of the equipment possible and the technical skill of the team members. We praise God for His abundant mercy!



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